

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The names of the Pendle witches who were hanged on Gallows Hill are: Anne Chattox (Anne Whittle), Anne Redfern, Elizabeth Device, James Device, Alizon Device, Jane Bullock, John Bullock, Katherine Hewitt (Mouldheels), Alice Nutter and Isobel Robey. Jennet Preston, who lived in Yorkshire, was hanged in York. There's no record of what happened to the bodies of the Pendle witches after Gallows Hill.

In the quiet town of Lancaster, where history and mystery coexisted, a place of dark legends stood tall: Gallows Hill. Perched on a hillside next to the imposing Ashton Memorial and overlooking Williamson Park, it was a haunting reminder of the town's chilling past. For centuries, it had been the favored execution site of the Hanging Judges, witnessing countless lives brought to a sudden end.

But it was the infamous Pendle witches who etched their names into the annals of Lancaster's haunted history. These accused practitioners of the dark arts met their grim fate on Gallows Hill, their souls forever bound to the land they once called home. On that fateful day of August 20th, 1612, ten individuals were led to the hill to face their ultimate punishment.

As the sun sank beneath the horizon, casting eerie shadows upon the desolate landscape, the Pendle witches were made to stand atop a rickety cart. Fear filled their hearts as a rope was fastened tightly around their necks, the weight of their impending doom pressing upon them. The cart moved away, leaving them to meet their grisly fate.

A swift, merciful end was granted to some, their necks snapped instantly as they descended. Yet, others suffered a crueler fate, their bodies twisting and writhing as life ebbed away. It was a sight that struck terror into the hearts of the onlookers, a macabre dance of agony that seemed to resonate through the very air.

However, the story did not end there. Legends whispered that the spirits of the Pendle witches refused to rest, forever trapped between the realms of the living and the dead. Their restless souls wandered the hills of Gallows Hill, seeking solace and perhaps even revenge for the injustices they had suffered.

Late at night, when the moon cast an ethereal glow upon the land, locals would speak of strange happenings on Gallows Hill. Whispers carried on the wind, chilling echoes of forgotten pleas for mercy. Some claimed to have glimpsed shadowy figures moving among the trees, their spectral forms a haunting reminder of the past.

Superstitions thrived, and tales of mysterious happenings grew. The midnight hour became a time of dread, as it was believed that the veil between the worlds thinned, allowing the ghosts of the Pendle witches to roam freely. Locals would avoid Gallows Hill after dark, fearful of encountering the vengeful spirits.

Yet, despite the fears and warnings, there were those brave enough to venture into the heart of the haunting. Ghost hunters and thrill-seekers would make their way to the hill, armed with equipment to capture evidence of the supernatural. They sought answers to the mysteries that shrouded Gallows Hill, hoping to uncover the truth behind the spectral presence.

Some claimed to have experienced inexplicable phenomena during their nocturnal expeditions. Eerie whispers in their ears, cold gusts of wind that defied explanation, and unexplained orbs of light dancing through the darkness. The Pendle witches seemed to defy the confines of history, their spectral presence a constant reminder of the past.

However, the secrets of Gallows Hill remained elusive. There were no records of what had become of the witches' bodies after their execution. Their final resting places remained a mystery, adding to the intrigue that enveloped their tragic tale.

To this day, Gallows Hill stands as a silent witness to the events of centuries past. The Pendle

witches continue to weave their spectral presence through the fabric of Lancaster's history, their story forever etched into the very essence of the land. And as long as the moon shines upon the hillside, their restless spirits shall endure, bound by an eternal mystic connection to the place where they drew their last breaths.

By Donald Jay.